

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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Jersey City to Receive the 2009 Preservation Award for the Restoration of the City Council Chambers

JERSEY CITY -- Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, members of the Municipal Council, and the Division of Architecture will accept the 2009 Preservation Award from the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office for Jersey City's renovation of the Anna Cucci Memorial Council Chambers at 3:00 p.m. on May 28, 2009 at Trenton City Museum, Ellarslie Mansion in Cadwalader Park.

The **New Jersey Historic Preservation Office**, located within the Department of Environmental Protection, brings expertise in a variety of fields essential to preserving historic resources. Every year, the **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Historic Preservation Office** and **NJ Historic Sites Council** host the **19th Annual Historic Preservation Awards** in recognition of the efforts of individuals, organizations and government agencies who preserve the State's historic and archeological resources. This year, Jersey City has been chosen to accept the award for its restoration of the **Anna Cucci Memorial Chambers** in City Hall.

"Restoring the Council Chambers was vital to preserving a piece of Jersey City's history," said **Mayor Healy**. "Our Council Chambers is the City's most recognizable public room where many historic and important events have taken place. However, the Chambers was in dire need of an upgrade to meet the demands of modern times and it was important that it underwent major renovations without sacrificing the integrity of the Chamber's original appearance."

The purpose of the **New Jersey Historic Preservation Awards Program** is to increase public awareness of historic preservation; recognize contributions by individuals, volunteers, organizations and/or agencies, to preserve and advocate for historical preservation; recognize projects of excellent quality; recognize volunteer contributions to preserve historic resources who have demonstrated exceptional merit in the field of historic preservation.

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All individual accomplishments, projects and programs are limited to activities involving historic resources eligible for listing in the New Jersey and/or National Registers of Historic Places. In addition, projects and programs will be reviewed for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The city has recently completed a **\$1.9 million historic restoration of the chambers**, which was originally constructed in the late 19th Century. The Chamber's oak benches and wood paneling, darkened from layers of lacquer, were stripped to their original light color and the ornamental plaster work was restored to its original glory. The stained-glass windows and the dome have also been repaired.

In addition to restoring the chambers to its original appearance, the room has been equipped with new HVAC systems, restored and improved lighting, sound systems, and an interactive audio/visual system. Woodwork and ornamental plaster has been restored, and repairs have been made to the original stained glass windows and dome.

“The end result is truly spectacular and exceeds all expectations. Now, we have a state-of-the-art council chambers that will allow us to conduct our council meetings and other public meetings with modern technology,” added **Mayor Healy**.

The 11-month project was funded in part by a \$300,000 grant from the Hudson County Open Space Trust Fund with an additional \$1.6 million from the city's capital improvement budget. Architects Holt Morgan Russell, of Princeton, New Jersey, worked in conjunction with the City of Jersey City Division of Architecture in the restoration project.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///